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In This Issue

<i>Cyrtochilum leopoldianum</i> and its Bipolar identity, A Second Look - Stig Dalström	Pages 1-9
Why No Flowers for Nellie, Orchid-Painter Extraordinaire? Vauxhall History and Clare Hermans	Pages 10-12
For the “Love of Three Oranges” - Russ Vernon	Page 13-15
<i>Odontocidium Soly Sombra</i> - Juan Felipe Posada	Page 16
<i>Oda. Chargia ‘Victor’ AM/RHS</i> - Andrew Easton	Pages 16-17
Hybridizer’s Notes - Andrew Easton	Pages 18-23
President’s Message - Bob Hamilton	Page 23
Parting Shots	Pages 24-27



Cyrtochilum leopoldianum and its Bipolar Identity, A Second Look

Stig Dalström

Although the “International Odontoglossum Alliance” adopted its name from the most popular and what probably most of its members believe, most attractive genus in the world, some *Cyrtochilum* Kunth species can certainly challenge the magnificent displays presented by many odontoglossums. One large-flowered *Cyrtochilum* species in particular truly deserves our horticultural attention despite its vegetative drawback of producing the pseudobulbs widely apart from each other on a climbing rhizome. But when it produces a several meter long inflorescence carrying hundreds of beautiful flowers it is difficult to deny it a prime place in any garden or greenhouse. This article will cover some of the confusing taxonomic history of one of the most attractive species in the genus; *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum* (Rolfe) Kraenzl. Much of the historic information was published in the IOA Newsletter a decade ago but since there is still misunderstanding about the names involved, a revised version is presented here.

In an article published in The Gardener’s Chronicle, Robert Allen Rolfe (1905) writes the following:

“*ONCIDIUM CORYNEPHORUM*

About fifteen years ago a handsome *Oncidium* was described in these pages under the name of *Oncidium Leopoldianum*, Rolfe, (1890, ii., p. 556) from material obtained by Messrs. Linden L’Horticulture Internationale, Brussels, these consisting of a dried specimen [Figs. 1, 2], the collectors’ coloured drawing, and some living plants. From these a coloured plate was prepared (*Lindenia*, 6, t. 274) [Fig. 3], and as the plants were distributed it was hoped that flowers would soon appear in our collections. At length, as was supposed, the long-looked-for event happened, and a plant in flower, from the collection of E. Ashworth, Esq. Harefield Hall, Wilmslow, appeared at the Royal Horticultural Hall, on October 24, and was unanimously awarded a First-Class Certificate by the Orchid Committee. Mr. Ashworth had apprised me of the event and late in the afternoon I went to the



Fig. 1. The holotype of *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum*, possibly collected by Charles Patin and shipped to Jean Linden in Brussels where it flowered in 1890.

meeting, and was surprised to see the quite distinct but equally handsome *O. corynephorum*, Lindley, which had previously only been known from dried specimens. The discrepancy is difficult to account for, as the plant is believed to be one of the original ones, and the respective dried specimens are quite distinct in the structure of the lip. The probable explanation is that the two grow together, and as often happens in the *O. macranthum* section, may be confused when out of flower. The circumstance affords a clue to the habitat of *O. Leopoldianum*, which was not recorded. *O. corynephorum* is a native of Peru and was described by Lindley [1838] from dried specimens collected by Matthews at Moyambambo [sic. Moyo-bamba; author's note]. With these dried specimens Mr. Ashworth's plant agrees in every respect, and the



Fig. 2. Close-up of the flower of *C. leopoldianum* showing the acorn-shaped front-lobe of the lip.



Fig. 3: The plate of *C. leopoldianum* that appeared in *Lindenia* 6, pl. 274 (1890).

species is a very handsome one, as may be seen from the illustration [Fig. 4]. The rounded, undulate sepals and petals are rosy purple, with a broad white margin, and the nearly orbiculate lip is deep violet-purple, with a bright yellow base. In habit and in its long and twining inflorescence the plant recalls *Oncidium*.



Fig. 4: The colored drawing made by Mr. E. Ashworth, who successfully cultivated the plant that was brought to Robert Allen Rolfe's attention during an orchid meeting in 1905.

macranthum, but as regards the shape and colour of the flowers it is distinct from anything known in cultivation. A few other plants are known, and it will be interesting to see what they are when they flower. Such a handsome species should not be neglected by importers, as its shy-flowering habit is probably the result of weakness, owing to its treatment not being properly understood. We should suggest the cool treatment given to Odontoglossums and to *Oncidium macranthum* as likely prove the most suitable. R. A. Rolfe." (Rolfe 1905).

The enigmatic identity and origin of *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum* has been an interesting challenge from day one. The case involves species that are quite distinct and horticulturally desirable, and yet very poorly understood and scarcely represented in live collections. The first plant of this complex was collected in Peru in 1829 by Eduard Friedrich Pöppig (Pöppig # 1799). It was described as *Cyrtochilum volubile* in *Nova Genera ac Species Plantarum* [Fig. 5] by Pöppig and Stephan Endlicher (1836). The habitat is later described in English as "tall trees in the mountains of Casapillo, near the hacienda of Cuchero- Pöppig" (Lindley 1855).



Fig. 5: The type illustration of *Cyrtochilum volubile*.

In 1838 Lindley described *Oncidium corynephorum* in *Sertum Orchidaceum*, based on a plant collected by Andrew Mathews in 1835. This specimen has no specific geographic origin mentioned anywhere on the herbarium sheet other than "Peruvian", and is identified by the number "1918" (presumably representing Mathews collection number). This number is also mentioned in the type description and

identifies the holotype. When the “1918” specimen is compared with the type specimen for *Cyrtochilum volubile*, it becomes apparent that *Onc. corynephorum* and *Cyrt. volubile* represent the same species. Lindley also realized this later on and combined the two in his *Folia Orchidacea* (1855). But there is a problem! For some unknown reason Lindley maintains the name *Oncidium corynephorum* and lists the earlier published *Cyrtochilum volubile* beneath, as if listing a synonym. Lindley also cites a different specimen as *Onc. corynephorum*, cited as “Peru; Mayobambo—Mathews in hb. Hooker”. It is somewhat unclear but assumed here that this citing refers to a separate specimen now deposited in the herbarium at Kew and has “Mathews, 1838, Peru, Prov. of Moyobamba” written on it. In any case, there are some additional anonymous notes in pencil on the same sheet saying: “*Oncidium corynephorum* Lindley affine”. My interpretation of this note is that somebody compared this specimen with Lindley’s description of *Oncidium corynephorum* and realized that it is similar to, but not identical with that species. This anonymous observation would then be correct. The two Mathews collections (3 years apart) do indeed represent two separate species. In a different handwriting on the “1838” sheet, somebody has also written in pencil: “*Oncidium volubile* Cogn. ...”[The Belgian botanist Alfred Cogniaux transferred *C. volubile* to *Oncidium volubile* in 1905; author’s note], which is incorrect. When comparing flowers from the two Mathews specimens, it becomes clear that they are closely related but the differences in the shape and coloration of the sepals, petals and lip are rather distinct. Lindley’s citation of the “Mayobambo” specimen in *Folia Orchidacea* as “*Onc. corynephorum*” may be the reason why Rolfe (1905) had the identities confused, as we will see.

The description of *Cyrtochilum villenaorum* Christenson (Christenson 2002) is based on a jungle-collected plant that was brought to the Villena Orchid Nursery in Moyobamba, Peru, while Eric Christenson was visiting the place. The description is accompanied by a photo of an attractive species with flowers that have white sepals and petals mottled by pale lilac spotting and with a broad yellow and purple lip. The flower is actually rather similar to what Rolfe erroneously calls “*Oncidium corynephorum*” (Rolfe 1905).

Christenson writes in his article: “A striking new species, *Cyrtochilum villenaorum* was known from a single flowering plant brought to the Villena Nursery in Moyobamba by a native orchid enthusiast during my visit. Its precise locality is being withheld at this time pending artificial propagation of the species. The type plant is now actively growing in the United States and the Villenas have obtained several additional plants from propagation stock in Peru.” Christenson also confirms that *Oncidium corynephorum* is synonymous with the older name *Cyrtochilum volubile*, and different from his new species.

It appears at this stage that we are dealing with three, possibly four closely related but yet different species. The first one is *Cyrt. volubile*, or “*Onc. corynephorum*” *fide* Lindley, which has brownish flowers and a deep burgundy lip (Figs. 6, 7) The second one is the enigmatic *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum* (Rolfe) Kraenzl., with white and pale lilac flowers and an obtuse to acute, deep lilac-purple and yellow lip (Fig. 3). The third species would be Mr. Ashworth’s awarded plant, which Rolfe erroneously called “*Onc. corynephorum*”, with a similar coloration as *Cyrt. leopoldianum* but with a much broader front-lobe of



Fig. 6: Flowers of *C. volubile* from the Huanuco region in Peru.
Photo by Saúl Ruiz.

the lip (Fig. 4). The fourth “species” to enter the stage would then be *Cyrtochilum villenaorum*.

A plant purchased from the Villena nursery as “*Cyrtochilum villenaorum*” flowered in cultivation in the United States and received an HCC in 2007. The owner of the plant, Tom Etheridge, dutifully sent photos of the plant together with some flowers to the



Fig. 7: Flowers of *C. volubile* from Monopampa, Huanuco, Peru. Photo by Stig Dalström.

former Orchid Identification Center at Selby Gardens for a verification of the species (OIC 15203), where I was the Curator at the time. To my great surprise, there was no doubt concerning the identity of the plant. It was a “dead ringer” for the long lost *Cyrtorchilum leopoldianum* (Fig. 8)!



Fig. 8: Tom Etheridge’s photo of a plant purchased as “*C. villenaorum*”, but turned out to be the first modern record of *C. leopoldianum*. Photo by Tom Etheridge.

The implication of this event did not dawn on me right away but I could not help getting excited about the possibility of finally learning more about the true origin of this handsome species. But how was it possible that the plant had been purchased as *Cyrtorchilum villenaorum*? Perhaps Rolfe was right in his assumption that the two almost twin-like species grew together? The more I thought about this, the less likely it seemed. The flowers were identical in every aspect other than in the shape of the front-lobe of the lip. Knowing how notoriously variable and finicky this type of orchid can be when it comes to the shape and quality of the flowers, particularly in cultivation, I began suspecting that some clues were missing.

In early November of 2010, I had the opportunity to visit an area south of the city of Chachapoyas (where the plant collector Mathews once lived) together with the “usual suspects”; Manolo Arias, Steve Beckendorf, Guido Deburghgraeve and Saúl Ruiz. We eventually found some interesting plants in an open and deforested area (Fig. 9), and one of the day’s greatest catches was the world’s tallest *Epidendrum* L., which



Fig. 9: The abused and deforested area south of the city of Chachapoyas where interesting orchids were discovered. Photo by Stig Dalström.

later was described as *E. septipartitum* Hágster, Dalström & Ruiz-Pérez (Figs. 10-12), and a nice *Odontoglossum epidendroides* Kunth (Fig. 13). We also found plants that looked much like *Cyrtorchilum leopoldianum* with long creeping rhizomes, but were without flowers.



Fig. 10: *Epidendrum septipartitum*, the world's tallest *Epidendrum*. Photo by Guido Deburghgraeve.



Fig. 11: The greatest catch of the day is carried off by Guido Deburghgraeve (left) and Steve Beckendorf to be turned into the holotype of *Epidendrum septipartitum* (USM). Photo by Stig Dalström.



Fig. 12: Local fans of country & western singer Dolly Parton are eager to assist in scientific documentation of new orchid taxa. Here with the flowers of *E. septipartitum*.



Fig. 13: Flower of *Odontoglossum epidendroides*, which was discovered not far from the type locality for the genus.

A couple of weeks later, I had the opportunity to visit Moyobamba together with Saúl Ruiz, where we contacted the local orchid *matero* (professional collector) who had sold the original plant(s) of *C. villenaorum* to the Villena nursery. After some initial negotiations he agreed to take us to the site where the plants had been found. The plan was to leave Moyobamba “very early” next morning in order to avoid the heat in the middle of the day since there apparently was a considerable climb involved. Our local friend explained that we would have to hike up on a particular ridge and that it would be rather heavy (sweaty) unless we could get there early in the day.

Naturally, we did not leave Moyobamba until late in the morning and were not able to begin our climb until the sun hit zenith. This resulted in a murderous uphill trudge across some endless pastures and under a blazing sun, spiced with a recently acquired cold! When we finally reached the summit where we encountered a small coffee plantation, I could barely make it into the shade by myself due to dehydration and the feverish cold. It took some good time to recover before we continued into the scrub forest that covered the ridge at about 1800 meters elevation. But as the terrain flattened out it became increasingly easy to advance and it did not take long until we were generously rewarded. Plants of a large *Cyrtochilum* species were found growing on the ground, scrambling over some dense vegetation with pseudobulbs placed widely apart on an elongate rhizome (Fig. 14). It did not take long after that until we also found the first wiry inflorescence with some old and beaten-up flowers. Our guide explained that we were in the exact location where he had found the first plants of what had become *Cyrtochilum villenaorum*.



Fig. 14: Saúl Ruiz caressing the first plant of *C. leopoldianum*, from the type locality of what became the synonym “*C. villenaorum*”. Photo by Stig Dalström.

I studied the flowers and could not believe my eyes. The flowers looked just like *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum* (Fig. 15). Or rather, some of them did while others had a broader lip and hence would be



Fig. 15: A weak flower from the top of the inflorescence of a *C. leopoldianum* plant from the type locality of “*C. villenaorum*”.
Photo by Stig Dalström.

Cyrtochilum villenaorum (Fig. 16). I also realized that the flowers near the end of the inflorescence had narrower lips than the ones lower down. I could not help grinning. My obvious conclusion was that a strong plant will produce flowers with a broader lip (*villenaorum*), and gradually as the inflorescence develops and drains strength from the plant, the



Fig. 16: A flower from the lower part of the same inflorescence as the flower in Fig. 15, showing a broader front-lobe which correlates with the description of “*C. villenaorum*”.
Photo by Stig Dalström.

flowers become smaller with less developed segments and a narrower lip (*leopoldianum*). This is probably true in cultivation as well where newly imported plants that are stressed and weakened are likely to produce smaller and narrower flowers, like for many other species in Oncidiinae. The more I thought about this, the more reasonable it seemed and much more plausible than the theory suggested by Rolfe, of two almost identical species occurring intermingled and still remaining distinct. This observation resulted in a clear conviction that *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum* and *C. villenaorum* indeed are the same species.

In April of 2011, Saúl and I decided to revisit the area south of Chachapoyas together with “Wild Orchid Man” nature photographer Darryl Saffer, to do some film “shooting” for the upcoming documentary “Wild Orchid Man in the mountains of Amazonas” (Fig. 17). This turned out to be a very lucky decision and we found a strong plant in flower of what looked like *C. leopoldianum* in full glorious bloom (Figs. 18,



Fig. 17: Wild orchid film maker Darryl Saffer caught in the rain while “shooting” images of the broad-lipped form of *C. leopoldianum*. Photo by Stig Dalström.

19). The flowers were similar to the ones found near Moyobamba, except that the lip was much broader, the column wings smaller, sometimes lacking entirely, and the pale purple hue on the sepals and petals were without any clear spotting, as can be seen in flowers of *C. leopoldianum*. This threw a monkey wrench into my ideas about this complex. At this stage there was no longer any doubt in my mind that *C. leopoldianum* and *C. villenaorum* indeed are the same species with



Fig. 18: The magnificent broad-lipped form of *C. leopoldianum*, misidentified by Rolfe as “*Oncidium corynephorum*”, and that may need a separate scientific name. Photo by Stig Dalström.

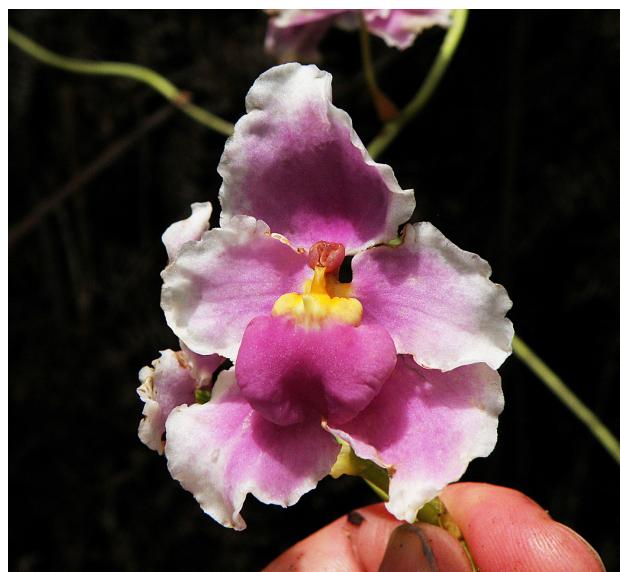


Fig. 19: It doesn't get any better than this! At least not in *Cyrtochilum*, or...? Photo by Stig Dalström.

the former name having priority over the latter. But how to handle this third “species”, with a much broader lip and a different coloration? Coincidentally, it agreed perfectly with Mr. Ashworth’s awarded plant (Fig. 4), and what Rolfe considered to be “quite distinct” from his *Cyrtochilum leopoldianum*.

The differences in coloration and shape of the flowers between plants in two geographically separate populations may seem sufficient to justify a separate taxonomic treatment to some (Figs. 20, 21). But what if there are intermediate forms? To rush into making taxonomic decisions may not always result in popular results, but in the case presented here the taxonomic status for the “two” lovely pink cyrtochilums eventually has to be decided (Fig. 22).

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Fig. 20: Cultivated plants of *C. leopoldianum* from the Moyobamba area maintain much of the distinct and typical flower shape. Photo by Manolo Arias.



Fig. 21: Does the difference in the lip shape justify describing this taxon as a distinct species? Photo by Manolo Arias.



Fig. 22: Natural variation of *C. leopoldianum*, or distinct species? Photos by Manolo Arias, edited by Stig Dalström.

Why no flowers for Nellie, orchid-painter extraordinaire?

21 November 2018

Reprinted with permission from the Vauxhall History online archive, and Clare Hermans, Chairman of the RHS Orchid Committee

It's a shame that orchid-lovers cannot leave a bouquet on the precise spot where rests Lambeth's peerless watercolourist and illustrator Nellie Roberts.



Odontoglossum Goldcrest First Class Certificate RHS
12th Jun. 1923 exhibited by Armstrong & Brown and painted
by Nellie Roberts.

Flowers could and should be left at Nellie's grave in gratitude for all the beauty that this watercolorist's brush captured during her 56-year career as an illustrator for the [Royal Horticultural Society](#), our near-neighbour just across the Thames in Westminster. If only.

Nellie died at the age of 86, unmarried, on Easter Sunday, 29 March 1959, and she rests in Grave No 262 D3 of Lambeth Cemetery in Blackshaw Road, Tooting. But there is no headstone bearing Nellie's name because hers is a 'general' or public grave. Quite common at the time, a general grave was a cheaper alternative to the purchased variety, and as many as 20 people might be interred in the plot.



Odontioda Charlesworthii 'Theodora'. First Class Certificate RHS 3 May 1910, exhibited by Lionel de Barri Crawshay and painted by Nellie Roberts.

Nellie, who left behind over 4,500 studies of orchids, was born, lived, worked and died in Brixton. She was 87 at her death in 1959 and is buried in Lambeth Cemetery, Blackshaw Road, Tooting, but nobody can say exactly where. There is just one known portrait of her, which appeared in Louis M. Boyle's *Out West: Growing Cymbidium Orchids and Other Flowers* (1952).



Nellie Roberts paints a Cattleya alliance flower at home at 72 Loughborough Road, Brixton. From Louis M. Boyle's *Out West: Growing Cymbidium Orchids and Other Flowers*.

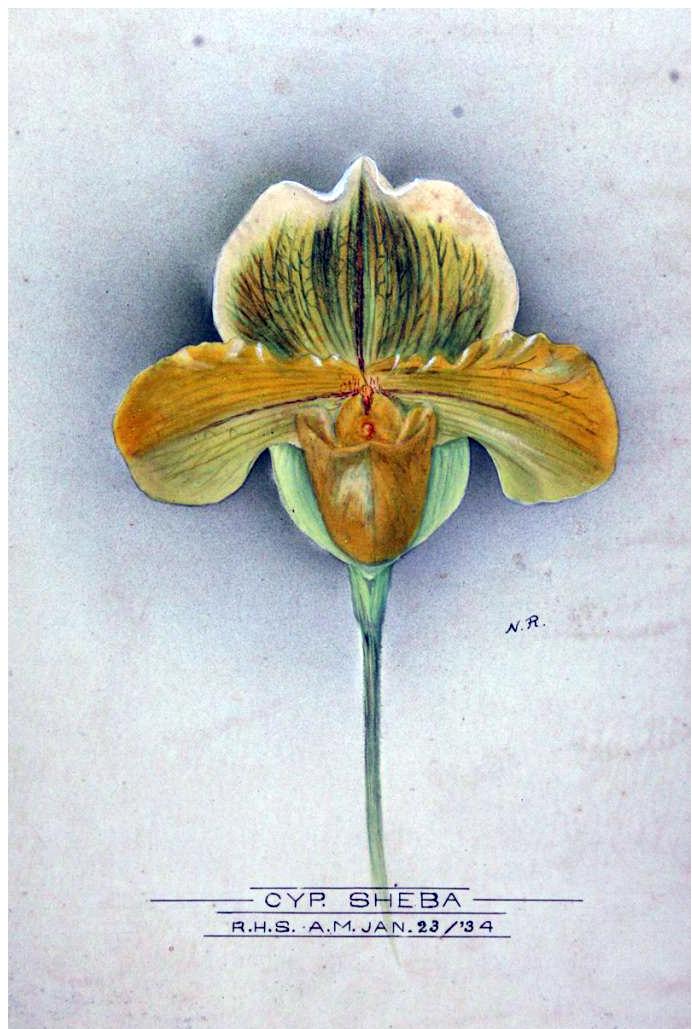
Born in Brixton in 1872, the daughter of a watchmaker, Nellie lived and worked in a room above the family shop at 72 Loughborough Road. ‘Very shy & retiring,’ she painted away in a ‘small, neat but rather cold room’, according to *The Orchid Review*. Nellie came to suffer so badly from rheumatoid arthritis and chilblains that she had to wear mittens. Nonetheless, what beauty she left behind with those thousands of orchid paintings.



Promenaea Crawshayanum. Award of Merit RHS 23rd May 1905, exhibited by Lionel de Barri Crawshay and painted by Nellie Roberts

When Nellie was in her teens, ‘orchid mania’ set in, and the RHS Orchid Committee was swamped by plant entries. This was before the days of colour photography, yet the Society needed life-sized portraits of the award-winning blooms. The young Nellie used to show flower-paintings in the family’s shop window, and they were noticed at a time when the Orchid Committee had decided to hire its own artist. She was taken on in 1897, subject to a six-month trial, and stayed for 56 years, bowing out in 1953, Coronation Year.

Nellie has a hybrid orchid named after her, the scented *Cattleya* Nellie Roberts (registered 1953), but never got to paint it because it was not an award-winner. She did, however, paint a cultivar, *Odontoglossum* Opheron ‘Nelly Roberts’ (‘Nelly’ is the spelling of the painter’s first name on her birth certificate),



Paphiopedilum Sheba. Award of Merit RHS awarded 23rd January 1934, owned by Frederick Hanbury and painted by Nellie Roberts.

which was an RHS award-winner of 1952. If Nellie Roberts did not *create* beauty (although who is to say she didn’t?), then she certainly captured it so it could be shared around.

Ross Davies

Let us know if you have any more information on Nellie Roberts. We will pass it on to the RHS Orchid Committee who welcome any additional information. Email info@vauxhallhistory.org.

Vauxhall History wishes to thank Clare Hermans and the RHS Orchid Committee for their help with our article and permission to reproduce Nellie Roberts’ paintings.

The Achievements of Nellie Roberts: An Appreciation

By Clare Hermans
Chairman of the Royal Horticultural Society
Orchid Committee

In January 1897 Miss Nellie Roberts, aged 24, was appointed the Orchid Committee's first Botanical Artist tasked with painting its awards.¹ She would continue in this role for another 56 years, completing over 4,500 paintings. This period spanned the end of 'Orchid Mania' to the mid-20th century, by which time many of the great orchid collections had been dispersed.



Odontoglossum Smithii First Class Certificate RHS 5th Dec 1905 exhibited by Messrs. Charlesworth and painted by Nellie Roberts.

Nellie's paintings helped reduce controversy created by the early duplication of names for the man-made hybrids, provided a permanent record and were an aide-memoire especially in the 19th century when hundreds of awards were given annually. Her work was not exclusive to the Committee; she made copies for the owners as well as painting some of the awards of the North of England Orchid Society. Given her prodigious output, it is not surprising she became widely known and was held in high esteem by the orchid fraternity.

Her paintings were natural size, frontal view and using background colour for emphasis, especially for white flowers. The same style, with only minimal variation has been continued by the eight artists who succeeded her, including the current post-holder Deborah Lambkin; colour photography has not been able to replace their accuracy.



Miltonia Lady Veitch. First Class Certificate RHS 18th June 1918, exhibited by Armstrong & Brown and painted by Nellie Roberts.

The collection of award paintings now in the [RHS Lindley Library](#) is an invaluable resource for the Committee and remains a unique and remarkable documentation of the awards. The paintings are still used in meetings when a submission is compared to previous awards given to the same species or hybrid. Furthermore, they add to the rich history of orchids, their hybrids and their illustration. Nellie Roberts' work comprises just less than two thirds of the total and is known throughout the orchid world. This is a remarkable achievement for the almost certainly self-taught daughter of a clock repairer from Brixton.

The Orchid Committee awards are written up in the RHS journal [The Orchid Review](#) and can also be seen on [Twitter](#).

For the “Love of Three Oranges”

(Provided photos have limited resolution)

Russ Vernon

I started growing Odonts seriously around 1985. With encouragement from my friends Larry Sanford of Cincinnati, Mario Ferrusi of Ontario and Bob Hamilton of San Francisco, I not only learned how to grow them better, but also began the fascinating journey of hybridizing.

It was particularly fascinating to me, how varied Odonts were when seeing more than several plants of the same cross bloom. They were often so different from one another. I noticed that even years of line breeding in one color area still resulted in variation. It would seem risky to stake your reputation on predicting what a particular cross would produce.

Red Odonts are probably more predictable than most other lines of Odont breeding. They are the result



Oda. Glowing Vision 'Harry Vernon' AM/AOS

purple pigment. Light moving through the surface cells, striking the interior yellow cells and reflecting back out the purple surface cells results in visually red flowers. There is more to this story but that can wait for another article.

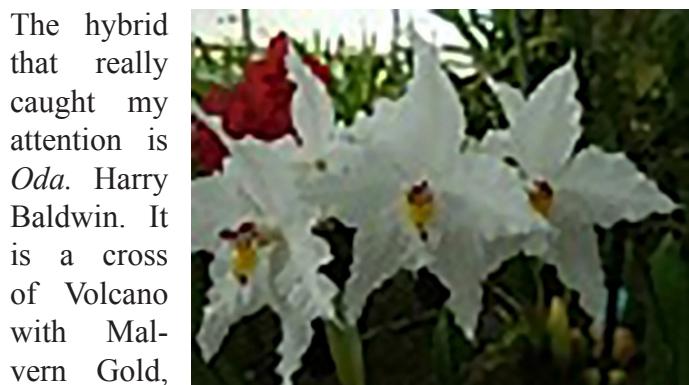


Oda. Leysa 'Mary G.' AM/AOS

A similar “light/pigment trick” is in play with orange Odonts. This is a bit more tricky as yellow in the interior cells is not an issue, it’s the surface cells that are less precise. Brown in the right shade and in an even layer, not marks, seems to work the best. Odont genetics don’t seem to “want” to spread what would normally be marks, into evenly spread pigment.

There must be a genetic trait that allows this to happen but I have not found it so we are using the results of past hybrids to create the “Three Oranges” and hope line breeding will give consistent results.

The hybrid that really caught my attention is *Oda. Harry Baldwin*. It is a cross of Volcano with Malvern Gold, both made in the UK.



Odm. crispum



Cochlioda noeziiana

Harry Baldwin is made up in part of *Odm. crispum* 55%, *Cochlioda noeziiana* 9%, and *Odm. harryanum* 8%.



Odm. harryanum

My theory is that the *harryanum* is the source of the spreading of color on the surface to help create orange. Note how the barring on the sepals and petals of *harryanum* is broad and nearly covering the surface. Here are two photos of two clones of *Oda. Harry Baldwin*.



Oda. Harry Baldwin 'Hawk Hill'

'Hawk Hill' has a thin lavender picotee on the margins of the segments, while 'Orange King' shows that the overlay of brown (from *harryanum*'s influence?) is not quite complete.

So where do we go from here to create orange Odonts? Bob Burkey made a hybrid called *Wilsonara* (*Wils.*) Harry Wiggs (*Wils.* Mem Commmander Wiggs × Harry Baldwin).



Oda. Harry Baldwin
'Orange King.' AM/AOS



Wils. Harry Wiggs
'Harry Vernon.' AM/AOS

My awarded plant of the cross is 'Harry Vernon' AM/AOS I crossed it back on Harry Baldwin 'Orange King'. The cross has not been named yet but here are a few of the offspring:



Three seedlings of the cross between *Wils.* Harry Wiggs and *Oda.* Harry Baldwin 'Orange King' AM/AOS



Oda. Marni Ris

Another line using Harry Baldwin for orange color is to cross it with *Oda.* Marni Ris, some flowers of which came out with orange tones. The result of this is called Harry's Orange Vision.



Five seedlings of the cross between *Oda.* Marni Ris and *Oda.* Harry Baldwin named *Oda.* Harry's Orange Vision

Isn't it great how Odont crosses can vary so much even in line breeding?

Currently I have a pod developing that is a sibbing of Harry Baldwin 'Hawk Hill' and 'Orange King'. I'm guessing that there will be a wide range of patterns and colors with some good orange colors.



Oda. Harry's Orange Vision x Oda Cornelia

The Eric Young Orchid Foundation made a cross using Harry's Orange Vision with *Oda. Cornelia* and got this interesting result as a first bloom.

An Odont, *Hamiltonara* actually, that could give the surface pigment and a yellow background to make orange could be Golden Harry 'Gold Vision' AM/AOS. Any of the orange flowers previously shown could be a good match.

But if we wanted to start a new line of breeding, we could combine



Hamiltonara Golden Harry
'Gold Vision' AM/AOS



Oda. Wearside Light



Odm. Questions

a yellow, both non xanthic and xanthic by example, with something like this, Mont Remen × Panise. Possibly there might be a solid orange using the xanthic form of yellow.



Oda. Mont Remen × Panise

The great thing about breeding with Odonts is that you might not get many flowers turning out exactly as you envisioned, but many of the others can turn out to be just as beautiful and start you in another direction.

Russ Vernon
New Vision Orchids-newvisionorchids@aol.com
Located in yes, East Central Indiana

Odontocidium Sol y Sombra

Juan Felipe Posada

Going through the odontoglossum benches in Colomborquideas' nursery, once in a while you find interesting old timers. This time I want to tell the story of this *Odontocidium* that Andy and I found in flower last week.

The parentage is *Oncidium tigrinum*, a Mexican species and *Odontoglossum Queen Alexandra*, a typical combination of two Colombian species. I made this cross in September 1980, the seed was sown here at my lab in October 1981, as a green pod. Going still back in the story



Odontocidium Sol y Sombra

of the cross, in April 1972 I remade the cross *Odm. harryanum* × *Odm. spectatissimum*, that was originally registered in 1902 by Charlesworth Ltd., as *Odm. Queen Alexandra*.

Now if we search the offspring of this early *Odm. Queen Alexandra* cross, we find that it was not used very much since its registration in 1902. Only 20 times before 1926, 4 times in the 30s, all well before my registration in 1988, and no more to this date. Not many progeny to be remembered, except for *Odm. Yukon Harbor* by Beall and *Oda. Triuma* from Charlesworth.

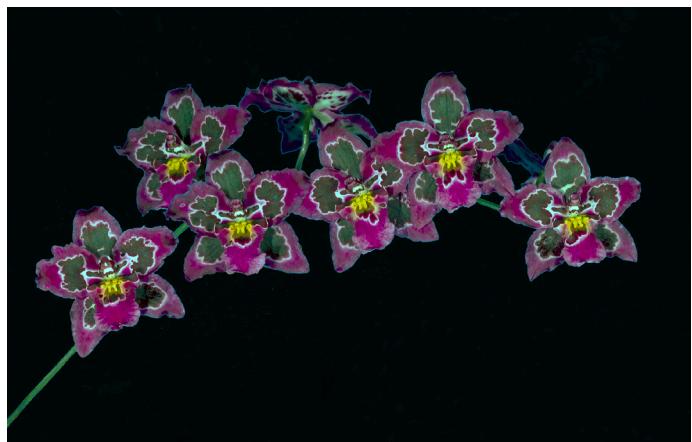
Here in *Odcdm. Sol y Sombra*, that by the way means Sun and Shade, we have 50% *Oncidium tigrinum*, 25% of each *Odm. harryanum* and *Odm. spectatissimum*. One of the nice things in this plant is that the yellow color in the lip does not fade as in almost all the *tigrinum* hybrids. The other good feature is that the spike habit is manageable, not very long. Our expectations now are high as we think that the combination of these three species can lead us to some further very interesting things.

Only the future will tell us !!!!!!!

Oda. Chargia 'Victor' AM/RHS

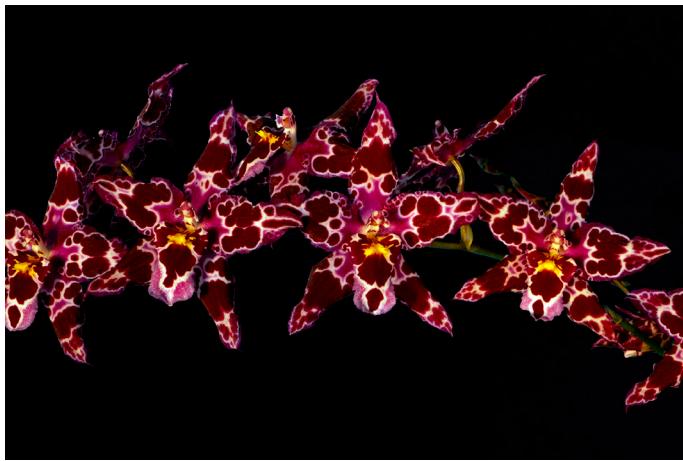
Andy Easton

One thing we have to accept if we grow orchids is that some names are incorrect either by an honest error or a deliberate error! This is just a fact of orchid life which we have to live with. The story



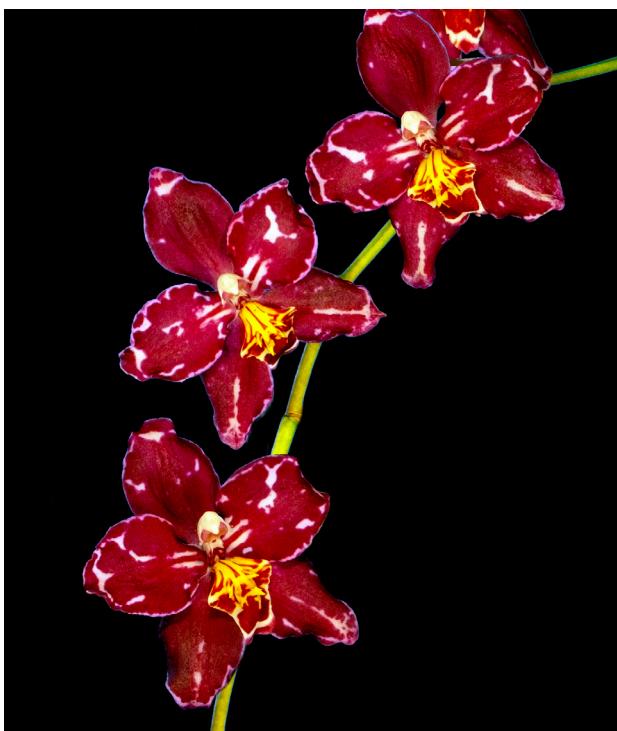
Oda. Chargia 'Victor' AM/RHS

of this plant, according to Howard Liebman, is that he found the plant in the collection of Victor De Rosa when he was back practicing medicine in the Northeast US. Maurice Lecoufle saw the plant and got a piece to clone. Not many plants were produced, and the mother plant died. One of the meristems was shown by Vacherot & Lecoufle and when entering the plant, Maurice Lecoufle consulted with a former Charlesworth employee (probably one of the slippery Greatwood brothers) and they came up with name of *Oda. Chargia*. It was duly awarded under that name by the learned RHS judges. Of course, as far as I'm concerned, I don't really distinguish between *Cyrtochilums* and *Odonts* but clearly, thanks to a bit of sleuthing by Bob Hamilton, the so-called *Oda. Chargia 'Victor'* is indeed a *Cyrtochilum edwardii* hybrid. If you follow the Kew taxidiots then you might call it a *Cyrtocidium* now but most of us are happy to stick with *Odm.* or *Oda*. We have a plant of it at Colomborquideas and the term weed comes to mind when I think of the plant. It is a great doer and makes tall well-branched inflorescences. I have never used it as Bob Hamilton is working in the line and I must make a high percentage of crossings with an eye to the pot plant trade which is vital to ensure the expansion of interest in the Odont Alliance product. If you look at Bob's hybrids with *Oda. Shelley* and *Oda.*



Oda. Shelley 'Spring Dress' ×
Oda. Chargia 'Victor' AM/RHS

Chargia ‘Victor’, you can see some stunningly patterned results. Now, apparently because of the *Cyrtochilum* influence, many but not all of



Oda. Prince Vultan × *Oda Chargia 'Victor'*
AM/RHS

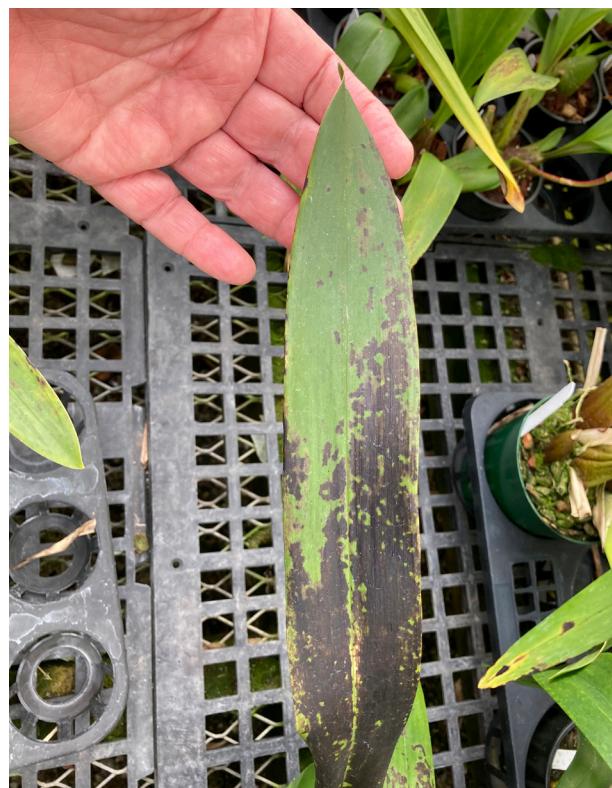
the Chargia offspring can exhibit unsightly foliar streaking. Bob reports that many of the Prince Vultan × Chargia offspring are marked in this fashion. It is not a virus, but a physiological disturbance related to some genetic fault in the type. We see a similar foliar disturbance in certain *Cymbidium* lines when a species like *Cym. ensifolium* is added into the genetic mix. However, in the crossing of Chargia with *Oda. Shelley 'Spring Dress'* AM/RHS, all the seedlings are pristine.

Editor’s note: Dr Howard Liebman, who is a knowledgeable resource of *Odontoglossum* history in the US offers the following information in response to a question about the likely background of *Oda. Chargia* “Victor”:

“I went through my catalogues from L. Sherman Adams who were the source of Victor DeRosa’s plant; I also have a copy of DeRosa’s list of the names of the plants DeRosa acquired from L. Sherman Adams. The list contains a plant named *Oda. Zetna* which is likely a misnomer. I wonder if it could be *Oda. Zena*? Sander’s Orchid List has two Zetas, an *Odm.* (McBean’s, 1924) and an *Oda.*, (Charlesworth Ltd., 1933) neither of whose makeup makes them possibilities. Sander’s lists an *Oda. Zena*, *Oda. Devossiana* (*edwardii* × *noezliana*) × *Odm. noble*. *Oda. Zena* is a likely possibility for what has erroneously been called *Oda. Chargia* “Victor”.

Example of Intergeneric Leaf Necrosis

An extreme example of the necrosis sometimes seen in *Odontoglossum* × *Cyrtochilum* first generation hybrids e.g. *Oda. Meteor* (*Oda. Vuylstekeae* × *Cyrt. edwardii*)



Hybridizer's Notes

Andy Easton

Mps. Bleuana alba 4n

We made this crossing at Colomborquideas back around August 2001 on a visit to Medellin for their annual Festival Show held always in the first week of August. There was nobody in Colombia doing Oryzalin work at the time so the following year I brought back, in August, a huge packet of dry seed. Bob duly sowed and treated the seed and plantlets were plated out in both the US and Colombia. The cross was extremely vigorous and many seedlings bloomed out. New Horizon donated a 4n one to the IOA auction in San Francisco in February of 2016 which was purchased by Deborah Halliday of San



Mps. Bleuana alba 4n

Diego. The following December she exhibited the plant named *Mps. Bleuana 'Shawnee'* and gained an AM/AOS for it. Like so many of Bob's and my Odont hybrids, most of them seem to have disappeared into that great seedling Odont vortex from which little ever emerges! We have a big batch at Colomborquideas and when they are in bloom, the fragrance can be almost overwhelming. But my toothpick seems to have lost its touch with *Miltoniopsis* and I can't recall a single pod from any of my recent efforts. Of course I am trying to cross the alba *Mps. Bleuana* with things like (*Milt. spectabilis* alba × *Odm. Parade*) so I am pushing the genetic envelope just a little!!!

Oda. Susan Preston Richards (*Oda. Petit Port* × *Oda. Tricky Woo*)

For me this is the best of the current red Odontiodas that I am familiar with. It has size, color and vigor. Have no idea who SPR was or is but she surely has a fine orchid named for her! *Oda. Petit Port*, one parent, has a good track record as an Eric Young origination. *Oda. Petite Shine* did well for Golden Gate and Wearside Pattern was almost the last decent Odont from Charlesworth. Best by far of the Petit Port offspring is *Oda. Burning Bed* (how in the hell did it get that grex name??), which is a parent (with *Odm. Tribbles*) of the wonderful *Oda. John Miller* crossing. Colomborquideas has several stunning crosses from *Oda. SPR* as also does Orquifollajes. All are waiting for the new registration system to get underway and then the Odont World is in for a very pleasant surprise.



Oda. Susan Preston Richards



Oda. Susan Preston Richards

Odm. cirrhosum 4n

The provenance is a bit murky but this plant likely arose from an oryzalin treatment by Bob that was taken to Hawaii by Steve Skoen and which found its way back to Pacifica from there. *Odm. cirrhosum* is an intrinsically beautiful species as a 2n or 4n and deserves a lot more attention from hybridizers. For many Odont enthusiasts it is actually their favorite species of the genus. But..... the 4n *Odm. cirrhosum* plant that we have at Colomborquideas is a bit of a disappointment to me. It has a rather tall spike with the flowers all clustered at the tip of the inflorescence. I am looking for a better one as the whole “spidery” group of Odonts such as *Odm. naevium*, *Odm. lucianianum* or *Odm. cirrhosum* are very appealing to both enthusiasts and the wider public.



Odm. cirrhosum 4n

Odm. Warnhamense 4n (*Odm. hallii* × *Odm. pescatorei* / *nobile*)

This remake of a hybrid first registered over a century ago in a tetraploid version is interesting. The original combination of *Odm. hallii* × *Odm. pescatorei* / *nobile* went nowhere with a hybrid registration endpoint in



Odm. Warnhamense 4n

the 1930s. But in light of the truly spectacular *Oda. Peter Wullner* 4n seedlings (*Oda. Una* × *Odm. hallii*), it might be time to revisit some hybrids with *Odm. Warnhamense* also. A peripheral comment..... insects of various sizes will randomly pollinate assorted Odonts at Colomborquideas. But I would guess we see fewer than 50 of these pollinations a year unlike the results for some of the undistinguished Pleurothallids that seem to be oozing pods and seeds almost continually. However, one rapidly swelling pod is forming mid-spike on our best *Oda. Peter Wullner* 4n. I am almost tempted to sow it just to see what the demented bee brought to the party!

Odm. Chryseum (*Odm. Excellens* ×
Odm. pescatorei / nobile)

A delightful second generation *Odontoglossum* which is 75% *Odm. pescatorei/nobile* and 25 % *Odm. spectatissimum*. One might have expected maybe a yellow tinge, but this serves as a reminder that good yellow Odnts would be hard to find in 1914 as the *Odm. spectatissimum* color was obviously rather recessive. The individual flower quality and inflorescence layout is beautiful. So, the obvious question must be: why did this line go absolutely nowhere in hybridizing? I think some of my respect for English orchid hybridizers is a little generous.... the greats were great but there obviously was a lack of vision on the part of the average hybridizers of the day!



Odm. Chryseum

Odm. Tribbles × *Oda. Shelley*

As readers of this issue of the IOA Journal will be aware, the correct name for the orchid formerly known as *Odcdm. Tribbles* is actually *Odm. Tribbles*. This is exciting because Stig Dalstrom is adamant that *trilobum* is indeed an *Odontoglossum*, albeit one that is also quite warmth-tolerant and for hybridizers, invaluable. When Keith Andrew learned about Tribbles he was keen to see it hybridized with his *Oda. Shelley* and although Keith never got to make the



Odm. Tribbles × *Oda. Shelley*

crossing, Bob did! I believe *Odm. Tribbles* (*trilobum* × *pescatorei/nobile*) is poised to become a seminal Odont Alliance parent. It already has an impressive track record (e.g. *Oda. John Miller*) but clearly many other lines will soon emanate from this wonderful parent.

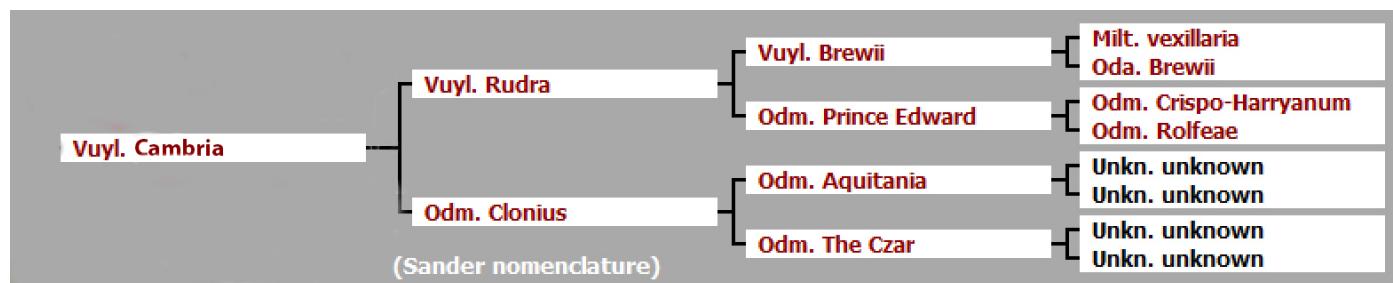
Vuyls. (Cambria × Oda. Brewii) #1

This is a first bloom seedling with seven flowers. It would by breeding appear to be triploid as it was made with a regular diploid Cambria and a tetraploid strain of *Oda. Brewii*. Some of the genetics of Cambria are unknown and with the silly nomenclature changes it has become somewhat confusing! The Clonius parent was definitely an *Odontoglossum* but its pod and pollen grandparents are unknown. Both of its parents and *Odm. Clonius* itself have carried through in many more modern Odont breeding lines from Charlesworth and others. The other Cambria parent, *Vuyls. Brewii* has a relatively simple yet intricate parentage. Thanks to the “taxidiots”, the name Brewii appears twice yet one is a *Vuylstekeara* Brewii (1920) which is *Mps. vexillaria* × *Oda. Brewii* and *Oda. Brewii* (1913) which is the primary between *Cda. noezlana* × *Odm. harryanum*). When *Vuyls. Brewii* was crossed to *Odm. Prince Edward*, a hybrid made up of 50% *Odm. harryanum* 25% *Odm. crispum* and 25% *Odm. pescatorei / nobile*, the hybrid *Vuyls. Rudra* resulted, which is the pod parent of the famous *Vuyls. Cambria*. Are you following? It is a complicated trail! So, with this background genetic information, I want readers to look closely at this flower, specifically its lip conformation. Think about it and then ask yourself, does this lip more closely resemble the lip of *Odm. harryanum* or *Odm. wyattianum*? My eye sees some *Odm. wyattianum* here..... where could it have come from? I know Bob’s *Oda. Brewii* 4n is completely authentic but maybe the great Charlesworth’s unknowingly used *Odm. wyattianum* rather than



Vuyls. (Cambria × Oda. Brewii)

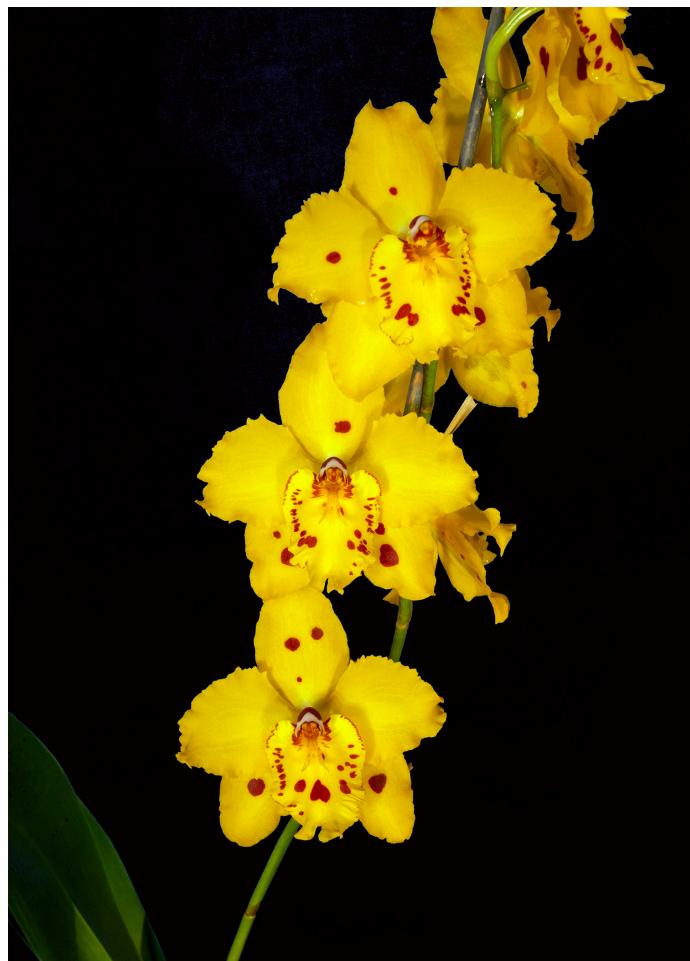
Odm. harryanum in one of the parental lines of *Vuyls. Cambria*???? By the way, I think this is a stunning flower and when Robert Culver has our new IOA registration system up and running I intend to name this plant *Vuylstekeara Larry Sanford* to honor a great Odont enthusiast who triumphed over the Mid-West climate and grew outstanding classical Odonts.



Vuyls. Cambria family tree. (OrchidWiz) Reprinted with permission from Alex Maximiano

Odm. Roy Hipkins

An outstanding yellow hybrid from Bob Hamilton named for Kevin Hipkins' father. Roy was an old school Australian, outgoing, generous, hard-working, and sincere. He was a friend to many in his business life and in the orchid venture which he and Alice started. Visiting the Hipkins at Woy Woy and then at Peat's Ridge was always a great pleasure. Kevin, his older son, transitioned easily into the full-time orchid lifestyle and he is still greatly missed by his



orchid friends around the world. Bob's cross gave us a clarity of yellow and a full shaped flower that is quite remarkable. The hybrid is essentially 50% *Odontoglossum Moselle*, one of the greatest yellow lines to emanate from the Charlesworth Odont breeding. To my eye, there are two distinct types of yellow Odonts. this and the alba lines as exemplified by *Oda. George McMahon 'Oro Puro'*. They are different and both spectacular. No hybrids registered from *Odm. Roy Hipkins* yet, but they exist and soon will be recorded.

Odm. Elaine

This wonderful primary hybrid registered in 1906, between *Odm. cirrhosum* and *Odm. harryanum* may have no RHS registered offspring but reality intrudes. More later on this. In 1984 when I attended the World Orchid Conference in Miami, I met Padre Angel Andreetta, an Italian priest who had spent much of his life as a missionary in Ecuador. He was also a botanist who had, in cooperation with Ecuagenera, established a significant orchid business. Quite eccentric, he was clearly a great character. As a gift to his longtime friend, Milton Carpenter of Everglade's Orchids, Padre Andreetta had brought a couple of seed pods of the reciprocal crossing of *Odm. Elaine*, made with two very fine forms of those species.

Milton accepted the seedpods gracefully but confided to me that such a hybrid would be totally useless under his tropical conditions in Belle Glade, Florida. He asked me if I could use them. In 1984, I was already well underway with plans to move my Featherhill Exotic Plants' operation from Santa Barbara to Rotorua, New Zealand. Odonts were surely going to be an important part of my Geyserland Orchids' business. I accepted the pods very gratefully and shot them into a Californian lab. In 1987, the plants were sent from California to Rotorua and actually formed part of our first NZ flask offering. We were deluged



Odm. Elaine

with orders..... for *Cymbidiums* and *Cattleyas* but nobody, yes, nobody bought one of the *Odm.* Elaine flasks. One of the locals who fancied himself as an Odont expert, Ron "Mindless" Mauder, decreed that they were old rubbish and scared off the punters. I do think I gave a bottle to Clive Halls, but we were left to deflask the rest. The plants grew well with the wonderful Rotorua water and quickly began flowering. The *Odm. harryanum* × *Odm. cirrhosum* cross order seemed slightly superior but both iterations were delightful.

We have used *Odm.* Elaine in several crosses. One held a pod with a red *Odontioda* whose name I have forgotten now, and the seedlings were sent to Floricultura who took large quantities of Odonts in the 1990s and early 2000s. They made a selection from one of the seedlings we sent, and this red *Oda.* did excellent business in Europe under a trade name for more than a decade. *Odm.* Elaine is amongst the most strongly scented odont hybrids with a wonderfully exotic fragrance. I think that Bob Hamilton may well do some interesting things with Elaine in the 2020s, hopefully some that will also be treated with Oryzalin. Elaine may be a slow starter in the hybridizing stakes, but she is about to maybe come alive again.

President's Message

Bob Hamilton

What a difference a year makes! Who could have predicted the World would face the COVID-19 pandemic? Actually, scientists have predicted just such "zoonotic spillover" for decades. This prediction mostly failed to get much attention. It is now validated. IOAJ readers with more interest in this subject should find the appended link an interesting read:

<http://nautil.us/issue/83/intelligence/the-man-who-saw-the-pandemic-coming>. It is too soon to predict the eventual magnitude of the COVID plague. It is certainly the worst in a century. Unfortunately, it is unlikely it is the last.

An immediate repercussion for orchid growers was the cancellation of the Internationale Orchideenwelt Dresden, scheduled for the first week of April 2020. In the US the Santa Barbara Orchid Show and Sale was cancelled at the last moments, hours before its opening. Plants had been staged; vendor booths were ready for sales. The same holds true for other orchid events; the efforts to produce these shows gone to waste. The cancellation of such world-class orchid events is both disappointing and damaging. Cancellations represent an enormous loss of income, not just for orchid growers and societies but also for the multitude of vendors, hotels, restaurants, taxis, etc. that benefit from events. Then there's the immeasurable loss of collegiality, the meetup of friends and colleagues and meeting new orchidists. Orchid spectacles are fun and a treat for the eyes given the variety of well grown plants beautifully staged and most of all our interactions. Sadly, public events including horticultural events are "off the calendar" for the foreseeable future.

On to a positive note. There's a new feature in this edition of the IOAJ titled **Parting Shots**, a section dedicated to photos submitted by readers, with or without a commentary, a veritable feast for the eyes. IOAJ readers who have a photo or photos they would like to share can email them to: jileathers@comcast.net. And, if you wish to add a caption, so much the better!

In conclusion, a heartfelt thanks to those who have put their energy into writing and producing this Summer 2020 IOAJ issue and making its publication possible.

Parting Shots



Odontioda (*Odm.* Nancy Crees 'Moonstone' ×
Oda. Crystal Palace) Ken Joy, Davis, CA



Odontioda Niobe "Perfection" AM-RHS
Ken Joy, Davis, CA



Odontioda Queen River 'Pacifica'
Ken Joy, Davis, CA



Oda. Burning Bed 'Pistol'
Luke Callaghan, Aberdeen, Scotland



Odcdm. Maeve (First Step × *cirrhosum*)
Russ Vernon, New Vision Orchids, Yorktown, Indiana



Oda. St Clement 'Tiffany'
Russ Vernon, New Vision Orchids, Yorktown, Indiana



Oda. (Teighmore × Drummer Roy)
Russ Vernon, New Vision Orchids, Yorktown, Indiana



Oda. Teighmore 'New Vision' (Avewood × Rough Bouillon)
Russ Vernon, New Vision Orchids, Yorktown, Indiana



Oda. (Avewood × La Feugeral) 'EYOF Vision'
Russ Vernon, New Vision Orchids, Yorktown, Indiana



Oda. (Le Marais × St. Clement)
Howard Liebman - Hybridizer
Tim Brydon, San Francisco, CA - Grower



Oda. Desirable
Tim Brydon, San Francisco, CA



Mps. Milla Hull 'Black Spider'
Robert Culver, Normandy Park, WA



Odm. nobile v. *alba*
Robert Culver, Normandy Park, WA



Oda. Cristor
Bob Hamilton, Berkeley, CA



Odm. [Extraaria × (Parade × pescatorei)] 4n
Juan Felipe Posada, Colomborquideas, Colombia, S.A.
Photo by: Andy Easton